Auschwitz: The Underground Guided Tour

What the Tour Guides Don't Tell You at Auschwitz-Birkenau

By Carolyn Yeager

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Introduction

THE STORY you are told by tour guides at Auschwitz-Birkenau is a story woven through with exaggeration, distortion and omission. These lies and omissions are not due to ignorance or misunderstanding, lack of information or the confusion of war, but intentional.

This booklet is too small to tell the whole story—it is an introduction only, to a massive fraud that continues today at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum in Poland. By the early 1990s, half a million people were visiting every year. It is now over a million. These millions have been told some things but not told other things. They are also shown some things, but not shown other things. They have no way of determining the truth of what they see and hear. They generally enter the premises in a state of firm belief in "the holocaust," and leave convinced that what they believed is correct— and even worse than they thought.

INDOCTRINATION STARTS EARLY ...

Young children study an exhibit at the Auschwitz Museum with their guide.

PHOTO: MMA-B WEBSITE.

However, the true story of Auschwitz-Birkenau is not in any way unusual considering its wartime setting. So brace yourself for an eye-opening tour of the *real* Auschwitz- Birkenau. Of the three camps that made up the entirety that operated from 1940-1945, only Auschwitz remains intact today, although with some reconstructions, and is the center of booming Auschwitz tourism. Birkenau has few remaining buildings, and Monowitz is completely gone.

—CAROLYN YEAGER
February 2010

THE AUSCHWITZ MAIN CAMP

Bird's-eye view of the Auschwitz main camp, showing the former administration building (today the visitor center with parking lot) at lower right. Upper right, outside the fence, is the theater building. The road leading into the camp (Arbeit Macht Frei Gate) is at lower center and runs along the large kitchen complex to its right. The hospital and crematorium are cut off at the lower left of the picture. The camp commandant's residence is at the far left, center.

A Little History You Don't Get from the Tour Guides

THE TOWN of Auschwitz was founded in 1270 by Germans—therefore "Auschwitz" is its original name, not Oswiecim, which is its Polish translation. Auschwitz was in the Germanic-ruled Holy Roman Empire until 1457, when it became part of the Kingdom of Poland. When Poland lost its independence in 1772, Auschwitz came under Austrian rule and became a prime location for Jewish traders working between Russia, Prussia and Austria. In the wake of WWI, Galicia (which included Auschwitz) was given to the newly formed Republic of Poland. In 1939, it was annexed back into the Greater German Reich. At that time, of a population of 12,000, over half were Jewish. The next largest group was roma (gypsies).

Gypsies made up the second largest population group living in the town of Auschwitz. A Gypsy Family Camp occupied a section of Birkenau beginning in 1943.

Because it was one of the largest railroad junctions in Europe (44 train lines came into it), a camp for migrant workers was built by the Austrians in 1916. Farm workers from all over Europe stayed in the well-built, red-brick barracks. In 1919, the Poles used them as an army garrison. Of the 20 barracks at that time, 14 were single story. When the Germans took over after 1939, *they added second stories and built eight new matching* two-story barracks.

RAILROAD HUB

Rail expansion turned tiny Auschwitz into the junction of Europe—and a perfect location for a main camp where prisoners were sorted and disinfected before transfer to smaller labor camps throughout Grossdeutschland.

KONZENTRATIONSLAGER AUSCHWITZ

Reichsfuehrer-SS Heinrich Himmler announced the plan to establish a POW camp at Auschwitz on April 27, 1940. German criminals from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp were used to convert the garrison into a prisoner-of-war camp, and it opened on June 14, 1940 with the arrival of 728 prisoners of the Polish resistance transferred from Tarnow. Rudolf Hoess was named the first commandant of the camp.

In 1942, after the construction of Birkenau had gotten under way, a camp classification system was devised and Auschwitz was designated a Class 1 camp (similar to Dachau). This was the highest class, where common criminals and political agitators had a good chance for release. The aim was reform, re-education and rehabilitation. Former Auschwitz Museum Director Franciszek Piper wrote that 1,500 prisoners were released from Auschwitz, but that doesn't include those who were transferred elsewhere and then released. The *Arbeit Macht Frei* slogan on the gate was only used at Class I camps, where labor did indeed bring freedom; it was not a cruel irony.

HIMMLER AND HOESS

Reichsfuehrer Heinrich Himmler (left) with the first Auschwitz Commandant Rudolf Hoess.

GATES OF DEATH?

Does this look like a prison door or the gate to a death camp?

Auschwitz functioned as a labor *and* a transit camp, meaning it was also used as an intermediate destination for prisoners being sent elsewhere. Inmates worked in nearby factories like I.G. Farben or on infrastructure projects, such as building air raid bunkers and cutting trees. The camp had professional carpenters, electricians, bookmakers, tailors; inmates learned these trades there, with 20 to 30 men supervised by a kapo (another prisoner). Forty inmates worked in the kitchen. The workdays had been formalized in 1938: On weekdays, work hours were 7:30-12:00 noon and 12:30-5:00. Saturdays: 7:30-12:00. Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday were free. Inmates were encouraged to attend Christian religious services and to reflect on the reasons for their imprisonment.

People in the town of Auschwitz reported that during the war it was possible to take tours of the camp on special days. For some, life in Auschwitz seemed luxurious compared to their own, strange as that sounds. The attractive red-brick sleeping quarters contained bunk beds with mattresses, had flush toilets, porcelain-covered stoves for cozy heating, and double-paned casement windows. Tree-lined pathways and flowers planted in front of every barracks in the summer made for a pleasant atmosphere.

At that time, ordinary people didn't have what we take for granted today. In Eastern Europe the poor lived without electricity, indoor plumbing and central heating. Food was not plentiful or varied, nor was clothing; and they were often at the mercy of political factions. People labored from dawn to dusk, six days a week.

OPEN-AIR FACILITY

Workmen clear the street in front of several of the buildings at Auschwitz in preparation of the 60th anniversary of the camp's liberation in 1945.

PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

TYPICAL BARRACKS IN AUSCHWITZ I

The average two-story (third story under the roof) barracks were well-maintained and had plenty of windows. Paved roads ran between the three tree-shaded rows of 28 blocks from the beginning.

WHO WAS DITLIEB FELDERER?

Ditlieb Felderer, a Swede who was fluent in Danish, Norwegian, German, French and English, personally investigated all of the existing German concentration camps in the 1970s. He questioned museum personnel from directors to guards; interviewed local people as well as survivors; read the official holocaust literature; searched the grounds and went into every building he could, taking photographic slides as a record. He published a book, *Auschwitz Exit*. He testified for four days at the Ernst Zündel trial in 1988 in Canada, during which 300 of the 30,000 slides he took in the camps were shown to the jury. Zündel was acquitted.

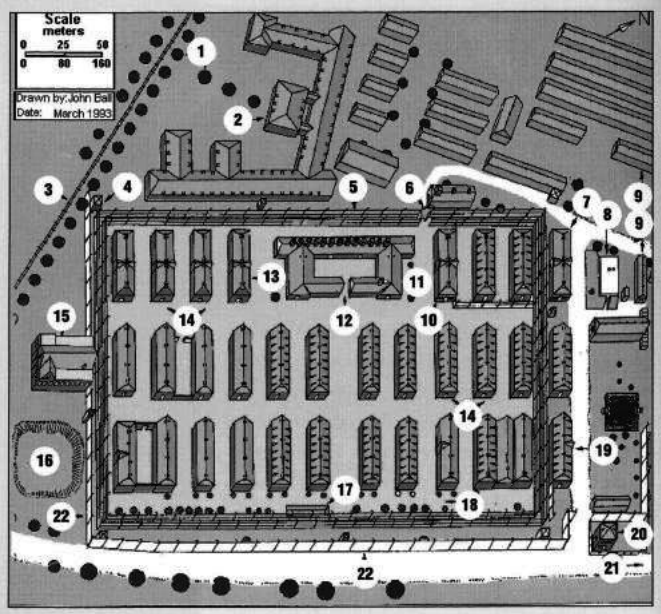
The Unofficial Tour

USING JOHN BALL'S accurate diagram, which shows the camp from the opposite direction as the aerial photograph on page 6, the important facilities can be located. The tour starts at the administration building, now the visitors center. When the camp was in operation, this building housed 19 delousing chambers that used Zyklon-B. The theater where visitors watch the propaganda film to get them in the right anti-German frame of mind was used back then to show films and German-made movies to the inmates. Ditlieb Felderer (see boxed item on facing page) states that Museum Historian Franciszek Piper told him that the seats in the cinema were identical to those used by the inmates.

After walking through the gate, the official tour takes you to several barracks that make up the actual museum, where the approved history of Auschwitz-Birkenau is told by enlarged photographs with text, drawings and items in glass cases. Every guide concentrates on their favorite exhibits about which they have memorized some stories; they do not necessarily agree or say the same things.

On my tour in 2009, our guide mentioned that a large photo of liberated children was "four months after liberation." When I asked why they were still wearing the striped uniforms, she admitted the photos were from propaganda films made later by the Soviets—a reenactment by adults and children dressed in the old uniforms. If I hadn't asked, it would not have been told.

Over 600 children were at Birkenau when the Russians arrived. But are these the children . . . or local kids dressed up months later? No films were made during the liberation in January 1945.



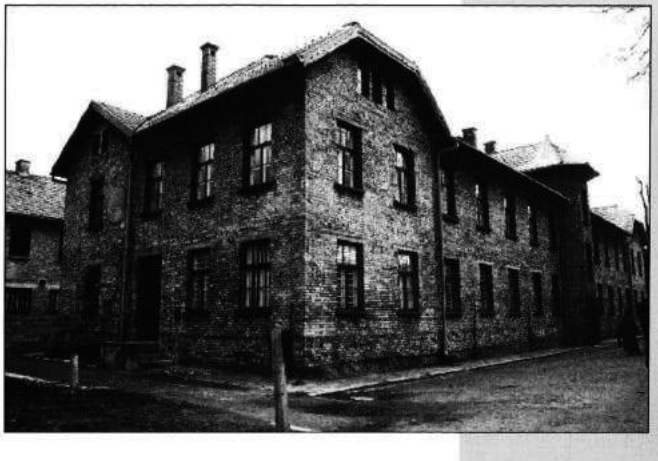
THE CAMP LAY OUT AT AUSCHWITZ

(1) trees; (2) administration building; (3) rail spur; (4) one of nine guard towers; (5) parallel wire fences; (6) Arbeit Mach Frei Gate; (7) hospital with surgical unit; (8) crematorium; (9) workshops for woodworking and sewing; (10) brothel and library; (11) place where the orchestra played; (12) kitchen with 13 coal-fired stoves; (13) post office; (14) three-story sleeping barracks; (15) theater for music and drama; (16) sand and gravel pit; (17) swimming pool; (18) Birch Alley (Birkenhaller); (19) camp administration offices; (20) camp commandant's residence; (21) Sola River road leading to town of Auschwitz (2 km); (22) cement fence around two sides of camp.

BROTHEL & LIBRARY

Just inside the main gate of Auschwitz is Block 24, a large building used as a brothel for the inmates. It was not a secret that the camp had a brothel; it was mentioned in books and its existence was confirmed by the Auschwitz Museum officials. It was staffed by mostly Polish women from the outside who worked there by choice, but German prostitutes are said to have also worked there. All prisoners were not allowed to use the brothel; they had to meet certain hygienic and other standards. It was also used as a reward for good behavior or extra effort.

On the first floor of the brothel was the camp library, according to former inmates. All main camps had libraries, and as a Class 1 camp Auschwitz certainly had one, but the museum is mum about it. There is no sign identifying the building as once a brothel or library, and you cannot enter it—it's now the office of the museum director and houses the archives.



Block 24 housed a brothel, a library, orchestra practice and concert hall in the basement, and later added an art museum.

Typical artwork created by prisoners in Auschwitz art classes.

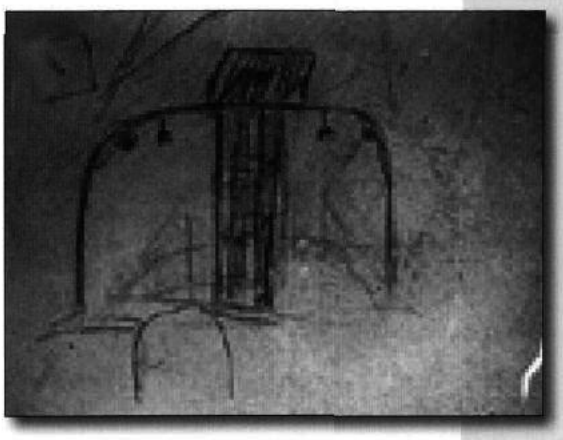
THE ART MUSEUM

Block 24 also held the camp art museum. The idea came from Polish inmate and artist Franciszek Targosz, whose accomplished sketches impressed Commandant Hoess. He named Targosz head of the museum, founded in October 1941, with its first home in Barracks 6. It was moved to Barracks 24 in March 1942, where it occupied two rooms until late January 1945. Art materials were supplied by the camp administration, and classes took place. Art of all kinds, including sculpture, was produced and exhibited for the enjoyment of the entire camp. Targosz survived until 1979.

During my tour in 2009, we were shown a room in one of the museum buildings devoted to "prisoner artwork." It consisted of drawings depicting extreme brutality carried out on helpless prisoners by SS guards; incredible flights of fantasy created by survivors from memory, after the war was over. Perhaps with a little encouragement? Examples of this type can be found in Zofia Rozenstrauch's *Death Camp Auschwitz* album and Yehuda Bacon's crude sketches that are dated "about 1945" and exhibited at Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial

Museum in Israel. This sketch by Bacon was actually submitted as confirmation of gas chambers in Auschwitz at the Adolf Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, 1961, and the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt, 1964!

Yehuda Bacon, *Gas Chamber*, 1945, Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



Authentic prisoner artwork, which you won't find in the museum room I was in, looks like this:

Left, Franciszek Jazwiecki, *Portrait of Stanislaw Ledermann*, 1943, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Right, Mieczyslaw Koscielniak, *At the Easel*, 1944, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

They are portraits, still lifes, landscapes and caricatures, typical of artists everywhere. The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in the town of Oswiecim owns some 1,470 pieces and exhibits them, yet only a very few depict violence or cruelty.

THE KITCHEN

Across the entry road from the brothel/library was the kitchen—the largest building in the camp. It had 12 chimneys for the stoves, and included a dietary section, a bakery and butchery. Forty inmates worked in the kitchen. Special diets were prepared for patients in the infirmary and hospital. The kitchen had flush toilets, which were unknown to the first Soviet soldiers to arrive, who thought they were places to wash their hands!

Below: View of the back of the kitchen just inside the gate at the main camp of Auschwitz, 1945. (Photo: USHMM Photo Archives)

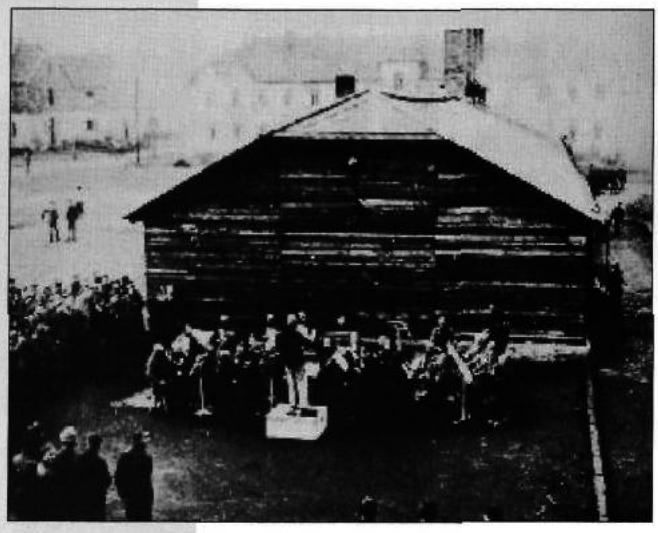
PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

The front of the kitchen is not identified for visitors; attention is directed at this spot to the Old Sentry Box and the gallows (used only once). There are plans underfoot to convert the kitchen into an art museum, which will further destroy awareness of the careful feeding of the prisoners. My tour guide only pointed out where the orchestra played alongside the kitchen, by the entry road, but said nothing about the kitchen itself. She took every opportunity to tell us that prisoners were starved to death as another way of killing them.

The unidentified kitchen from the front; the two matching brick buildings are in front of the long building seen from the rear on the facing page, forming a courtyard.

THE CAMP ORCHESTRAS

Many musical groups were formed by the inmates over the life of the camp. Today the signs and guides tell us the only purpose of "the orchestra" was to keep the prisoners orderly when marching out to and back from work. They don't want visitors to know the camp had a flourishing cultural life. In truth, the orchestras gave regular Sunday concerts and played on many other occasions.



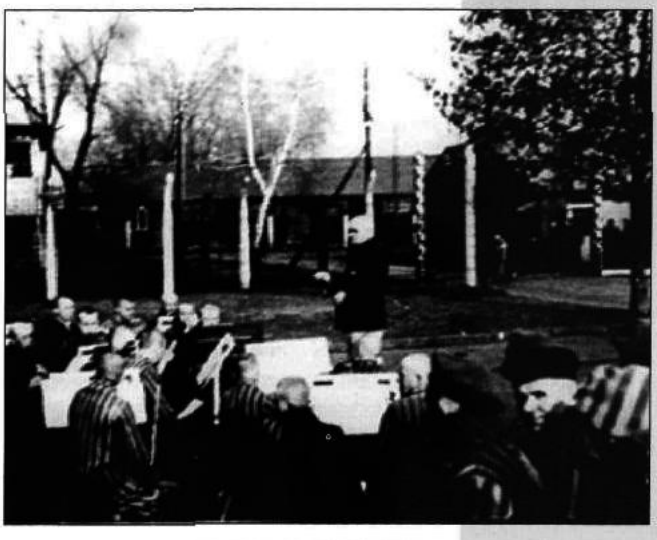
Sunday afternoon concert probably in 1943, but certainly after September 1942. The conductor is the Polish inmate Franz Nierychlo.

HISTORY OF THE ORCHESTRA

The first prisoner orchestra was set up in the winter of 1941, with Franz Nierychlo as conductor. The original group of seven musicians, playing first with instruments from neighboring towns, included a violin, contrabass, accordion, trumpet, saxophone and percussion. These were later replaced with better quality instruments, some sent to the musicians by family members. Their first formal rehearsal was held in Block 24, the basement under the camp brothel, where there was a small podium and a grand piano. This room became known as the concert hall, where the band gave shows for prisoners as well as guards and officials. The audience would stand along the walls; the musicians were scattered throughout the room, sitting wherever they could find a space. The group rapidly expanded to more than 100 members.

Survivor accounts such as Fania Fenelon's *Playing for Time* also spoke of the Auschwitz orchestra. A large blow-up of a photograph of the orchestra playing during the war was once displayed at the Auschwitz Museum at the main entrance.

Another view of the same concert. Note that inmates are gathering around, not marching to work.



WOMEN'S ORCHESTRA AT BIRKENAU

From the beginning of 1943 until the end of 1944, there existed a Women's Orchestra in Birkenau. The conductor was violinist Alma Rosé, the niece of Gustav Mahler. The orchestra soon became a permanent institution of the social life in the camp. With over 50 musicians and a variety of instruments, they played classical mixed with lighter fare on arrival of new prisoners, in the infirmary and the experimental station;

Member of the French resistance Fania Goldstein was deported to Birkenau where she became a member of the Women's Orchestra. After the war, she took the career name Fènelon, became a well-known cabaret singer and wrote her memoir and this novel.

at concerts which the SS attended and at Christmas parties and dances (there was a large room in the "sauna" at Birkenau that was sometimes used as a ballroom). The novel *Das Mädchenorchester von Auschwitz*, written by member Fanía Fènelon and first published in 1976, was based on the existence of the Women's Orchestra. Every member of the orchestra survived the war except for Alma Rosé, who succumbed to typhus.

OTHER MUSIC & THEATER GROUPS

Violinist Szymon Laks was conductor of the Birkenau Men's Camp Orchestra in 1944. The performances took place in various places around the camp. Birkenau also had a brass band and a camp choir. From an article in the *Jerusalem Post*, January 25, 1995:

> [The] Jewish children's choir at Auschwitz-Birkenau: I was a member of that choir. . . . I . . . remember my first engagement with culture, with history, and with music—in the camp. . . . In March 1944, I was severely ill with diphtheria and was sent to the camp hospital barracks. My mother had asked to be transferred to stay with me in the hospital. . . . Nurses, doctors and patients survived. . . .
>
> One of the youth leaders of our group . . . asked to establish an education center for children. He was given permission, and in a short time the education center became a spiritual and social center for the family camp. It was the soul of the camp.
>
> Musical and theatrical performances, including a children's opera, were held at the center. There were discussions of various ideologies—Zionism, Socialism, Czech nationalism. . . . There was a conductor named Imre . . . who organized the children's choir. Rehearsals were held in a huge lavatory barracks.

PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

THE AUSCHWITZ POST OFFICE

As you walk past the front of the kitchen, the first building to the right was the post office. Nothing in the museum literature mentions the post office, the guides don't speak of it, but the Geneva Convention rules, strictly followed by the Germans, ensured the sending and receiving of mail by all prisoners. The camps encouraged inmates to write to their relatives by making available pre-printed cards and letter forms. This was checked by the Red Cross, who never found any violation of this privilege at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Regulations printed on the address side are clearly stated. They translate as:

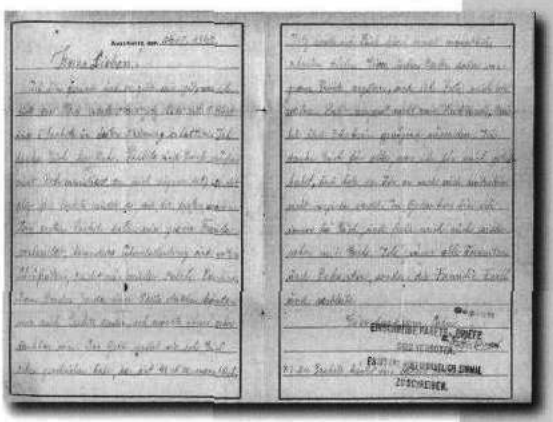
> Every prisoner is allowed to receive (and send) two letters or cards from (to) his relatives each month. The letters to prisoners must be easily readable, be written in ink, and consist of no more than

The one-story post office is the building with the different shaped roof, just past the Old Sentry Box and one-story kitchen building. The whole idea of an Auschwitz post office for inmates is anathema to museum officials because it doesn't fit the tale they are selling. It had to therefore be discarded.

Konzentrationslager Auschwitz

Domazlice

Protektorat. Böhm.



RUDOLF HOESS

15 lines on a single sheet. Only letter sheets of the normal size are allowed. Envelopes must be unlined. Only 5 stamps of 12 Pf each may be enclosed with each letter. No other enclosures are permitted, and will be confiscated. Postcards consist of 10 lines. Photographs may not be used as postcards.

Money may be sent. Newspapers are allowed, but only if ordered through the Auschwitz camp post office. Parcels may not be sent, as the prisoners can buy everything on camp. *(However, in the letter, the prisoner thanks his family for all their packages and asks for more. From much other evidence, it seems this particular regulation was not enforced. This also proves there was a camp store for inmates, where they could buy things with money sent from home—something else that is never mentioned in the museum literature or by the guides.)*

Requests to camp authorities for release are pointless. Visits to prisoners are not permissible.

Signed, the Camp Commandant

On the inside of the form is the letter from the prisoner. Notice that it reads "Post Office II"—indicating there was more than one post office at Auschwitz:

Addressed to; Josef Novy, Bakery
Domazlice, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

From: Josef Novy
Date of Birth: 27th April 1911
Prisoner Number: 73,034. Block 9a,
Concentration Camp Auschwitz, Post Office II
Auschwitz, 14th February 1943

My dear ones!

I'm in good health, and I'm all right— I hope the same *applies to you. I've received three letters and six* parcels from you recently—all in good shape. Letters and parcels may not be sent registered, just send the parcels as per the first ones. The first parcels made me very happy— particularly the chocolate, honey and the many sweets— please send more like that. My brother Jarde and aunt Milka could also send me

Letter forms given to prisoners provided space for longer, more private messages than postal cards. There is no reason to believe that normal letters to and from families were ever discouraged by camp authorities.

packages— I would be very grateful. Send the money as I previously asked you, i.e., RM 40—per month.

From now on I shall only be allowed to write once a month. Your lovely letters are a source of great happiness, and I look forward to receiving more. Please don't forget to send me garlic, onions and enough sugar. I thank you for everything you have done for me, and I hope that you will not forget about me. I'm always with you in my thoughts, and am looking forward to seeing you again. Please give my regards to all friends and relations, especially the Faila family.

Your thankful son, Josef

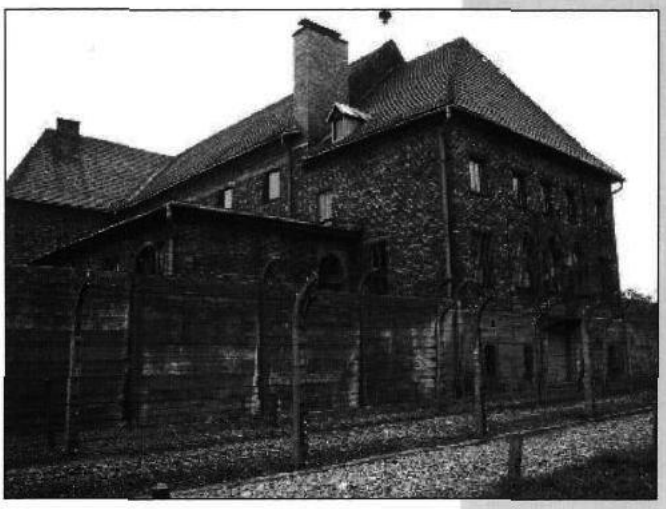
PS. You can send parcels frequently.

There are many such letters from concentration camp inmates recorded in the literature and circulating around the world. Note that this is February 1943 after thousands had supposedly been gassed at Auschwitz I, and "everybody knew" what was going on. But inmate Josef Novy appears blissfully unaware of this and confidently looking forward to his release.

Prisoners congregate at the infirmary *entrance of Block 19*, above which the sign reads: Inmates Hospital, Care-Giving Block, Admission strictly prohibited.

INFIRMARIES

After passing the post office, blocks 19-21 across the street (also block 28, facing) were the camp infirmaries. This would have been where non-surgical cases were treated. It makes sense that they were close to the kitchen, since most patients were on special diets. Today, these barracks are identified with a

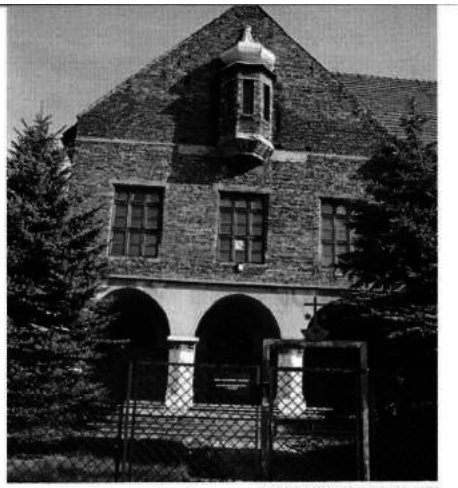


Rear view of the theater building taken in 1987 showing it just outside the camp perimeter so that non-inmates and public could attend the productions.

sign that puts the word "Infirmary" in quotes and states the SS doctors selected some patients for death and selected others for medical experiments. This is shocking cynicism by museum administrators when they know of the high percentage of inmates who were given medically appropriate treatment and returned to work. Germany needed labor and the health of the labor force was a prime concern. My tour guide walked right past the infirmary buildings without saying a word.

THE THEATER

Walking over to the perimeter fence, you see the large brick theater building just outside. It is completely ignored by museum officials and guides; the official story is that it was never used as a theater, but only as storage for confiscated Jewish clothing and Zyklon B



Front entrance to the theater, which became a home for Catholic Carmelite nuns between 1984 and 1993. They were forced to leave when American Jews protested the building's use by Catholics.

PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

pesticide, as reported by the Soviets in January 1945. However, that flies in the face of reports of former inmates who tell of the many activities that took place in the theater and that Zyklon B was stored in the Administration Building. David Cole, holocaust researcher, wrote: "The last pictures taken inside this building showed pianos and costumes and a stage where the inmates used to put on productions."

Franciszek Piper was director-historian at the Auschwitz Memorial Museum from 1965 until 2006.

Ditlieb Felderer testified under oath at the 1988 Zündel trial that the theater was used by the inmates to put on plays and contained a stage and musical instruments. Felderer decided to investigate the large building after an Auschwitz tour guide told him the building was unimportant and was only used by the Germans to put junk into. He interviewed various museum officials and guards, during which time museum historians Franciszek Piper and Danuta Czech confirmed to him that the building was used as a theater during the war. He showed a slide of a Ukrainian choir singing in what

he believed was the theater building, taken from the Dürrfeld file of the United States Archives. Most large German camps had concert halls where inmates organized regular Saturday-night theater productions, operas and dances attended by thousands of fellow-inmates. Auschwitz was no different. These concerts were the envy of villagers outside the camp, who did not have the instruments or halls for such gatherings. At times villagers were invited and enjoyed the productions alongside camp inmates. They and workers and families from Monowitz, Birkenau and some sub-camps entered at the main door at the front of the building. Up to eight repeat performances a day were necessary to accommodate everyone. The only larger hall was in the Catholic Church in town, 2 kms (1.2 mi) north.

These clever and artistically designed playbills are among several on display at the Mauthausen memorial site in Austria.

THE SWIMMING POOL

Continuing alongside the perimeter fence and turning left onto shady Birch Alley (Birkenhaller), you come to the swimming pool. Interestingly, the pool for inmates was not denied by museum staff until a few years ago, although tourists who asked to see it were told by guides that it was "off limits." Located right inside the fence, the pool measures 25 meters long, six meters wide and three meters deep.

According to Ditlieb Felderer, Museum Historian Piper told him that the pool had been used to rehabilitate inmate patients and as recreation. Wartime aerial photographs taken by the Allies confirmed its existence. Books written by former inmates refer to the Auschwitz pool; some say they sneaked into the pool at night for a swim; others that it was used for water polo. For example, Marc Klein, a French detainee, recalls the swimming pool in his booklet *Observations et réflex-*

ions sur les camps de concentration nazis:

> Auschwitz I was made up of 28 blocks built of stone laid out in three parallel rows between which *ran paved streets. A third street ran* the length of the quadrangle and was planted with birch trees: the Birkenhaller intended as a walkway for the detainees, with benches; there also was an open-air swimming pool. (Booklet of 32 pages printed in Caen, 1948, p.10)

He also wrote:

> . . . On Sundays and holidays . . . football, basketball and water-polo matches (in an open-air pool built within the perimeter by detainees) attracted crowds of onlookers. (*De l'Université aux camps de concentration*: Télmorgnages strasbourgeois, Paris, les Belles-lettres, 1947, p. 453.)

Inmates were sometimes also allowed to swim in the nearby Sola River, according to interviews with Jehovah's Witnesses who had been interned in the camp. Yet in 2009, when I asked at the information counter the location of the swimming pool, I was met with a blank stare. After persisting, I was finally answered with, "Oh, do you mean the fire brigade reservoir?" The sign shown below, in Polish, English and Hebrew, was placed alongside the pool sometime after 2005.

Birkenau also has a pool, which few have seen, but which now sports a similar sign. The water in the pool would hardly have been sufficient for fire-fighting in a camp with 300 buildings!

The swimming pool in 1996. Birch Alley on the right, the perimeter fence on the left.

Auschwitz swimming pool with starting blocks and entry ladders. The diving board used to be attached to the tall central block.

Zbiornik przeciwpożarowy, wybudowany w formie basenu kąpielowego, prawdopodobnie w pierwszej połowie 1944 roku.
Fire brigade reservoir built in the form of a swimming pool, probably in early 1944
מאגר מים נגד שריפות הבנוי כבריכת שחייה. נבנה, כנראה, במחצית הראשונה של שנת 1944.

PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

The SS Hospital, just outside the camp. Note the double fence runs behind the building. The crematorium and "gas chamber" are just across the street in front, not shown. The rounded object at lower center is the entrance to a one-person air-raid shelter.

THE HOSPITAL

By continuing along Birch Alley and turning left at the fence perimeter, going back toward the main gate, you come to the SS Hospital which stands on the other side of the fence. It had a surgical block as well as a obstetrical/gynecological block for inmates (children were born at Auschwitz).

There were also quarantine areas in both camps for newly arriving prisoners, where they stayed for as long as six weeks to make sure they had no diseases that could be transferred to the rest of the camp population.

Dr. Laszlo Tauber, now a wealthy Jewish landlord in Washington, D.C., was the chief surgeon at the inmates' hospital at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Birkenau had several hospital buildings. One well-known inmate, Otto Frank, the father of Anne Frank, stayed there for three months in late 1944-early 1945, with the complaint of suffering from exhaustion. While he remained hospitalized, his two daughters were evacuated (following the rules of the Geneva Convention), along with many others, to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, away from the advancing Soviet army. Otto Frank was still there when the Soviets arrived.

Another famous inmate, Elie Wiesel, writes that he was in a hospital in Auschwitz recovering from an operation on an infected foot, and his father had been allowed to stay with him in the hospital. However, Wiesel chose to leave the hospital to go with the 60,000 others who marched west with the Germans to another camp, away from the impending Soviet "liberation." The guides at Auschwitz don't show the hospital.

Below, a view of the front of the SS Hospital across the street from the reconstructed "gas chamber"-crematorium. Isn't it inconsistent to have a weapon of mass murder right next to the building where the opposite is taking place—saving lives through medical intervention?

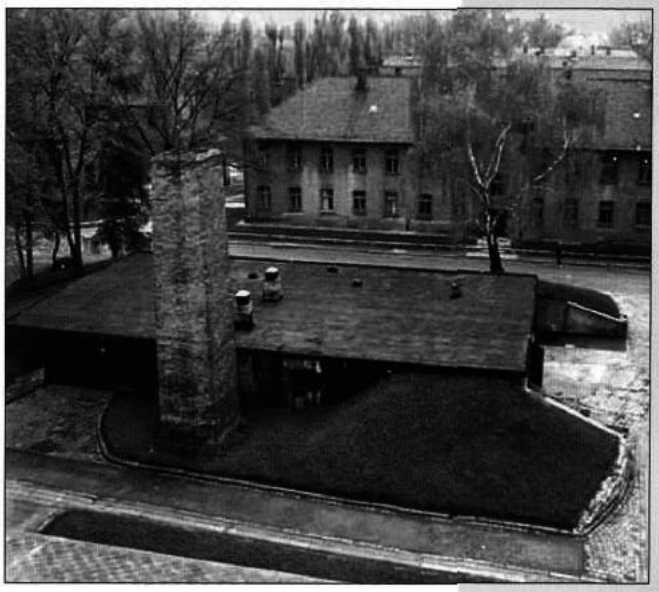


PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

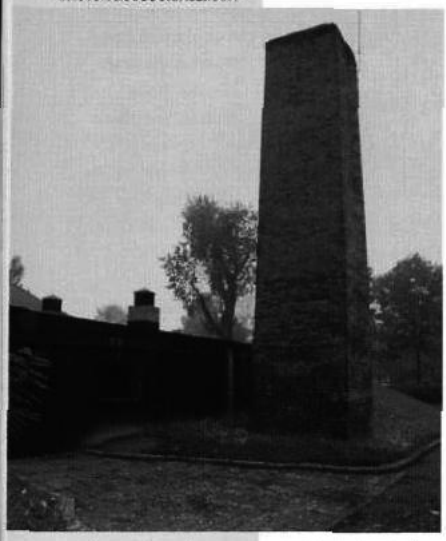


Photo above shows the brick chimney that was built in 1947 is detached from the building. It has never been connected to the reconstructed crematory ovens inside.

Right, the two ovens in the current building were built by the Soviets in 1947 and have never been used.

THE CREMATORIUM

Directly across the outer road from the hospital is the *reconstructed crematorium*, known as the Gas Chamber. Note the tall chimney and flat roof in the picture on the previous page. The official story is that the small vents in the roof allowed Zyklon B pellets to be poured into the chamber below, thus "gassing" the victims locked inside.

However, air photos taken by U.S. reconnaissance planes in 1944, not released until 1993, reveal a peaked roof with two one-meter high chimneys over the two cremation furnaces, no vents or holes over the alleged gas chamber, and no large chimney. It was then admitted that the Soviets changed the roof, cut the holes and built the chimney in 1947; in other words, the Museum went along with the lie until they were found out, and even afterward.

The Auschwitz "gas chamber" was really a morgue until it was slightly renovated into an air raid shelter by the Germans in Sept. 1944. Consider that if the morgue was a gas chamber, there was no morgue to store all those gassed bodies prior to cremation. The doorless opening at left, which leads to the room with only two cremation ovens, was cut through by the Russians in 1947. Before my tour group walked through, we were instructed to remain silent "out of respect;" it was roped off and dark inside. Before I realized it, I was back outside again with no opportunity to ask questions. What a disappointment . . . and I wasn't the only one who felt that.

For years the Museum staff used fake photos to pass the reconstructed gas chamber off as original. Only recently did they erect a sign outside of the crematorium showing the post-war changes that were made to the building interior.

We were informed by our guide that the reconstruction is superficial and does not negate the building's previous use as a gas chamber, and, in any case, it's now reported there were relatively few gassings at Auschwitz—the great majority were done at Birkenau.

The question, "Is this holocaust revisionism?" was met with silence. It appears the Auschwitz "gas chamber" myth is too fragile to bear any scrutiny.

PHOTO: CWPORTER.COM

Interior of garment workshop at Auschwitz where women possibly sewed military uniforms.

THE WORKSHOPS

From the crematorium you can see the workshop buildings where inmates both learned and worked at trades, but they are not on the guided tour. Himmler had ordered the construction of workshops for handicraft purposes; some were for woodworking; at least one was for sewing.

Jean-Claude Pressac, an exterminationist historian, claims that women deportees brought their sewing machines along with them, but that is ridiculous. The photographs of arriving women show not one carrying a sewing machine on her back! Writers like Pressac and the museum officials don't want you to know that the National Socialists provided professional work equipment for the inmates and had clean, well-run work areas.

RECREATIONAL SPORTS

Inmates engaged in a variety of sports at both Auschwitz and Birkenau. In addition to the swimming pools, a large sports playing field was close to the crematoriums at Birkenau, where soccer matches took place on Sundays. Ditlieb Felderer reports that one of the first people to tell him that it was used as a sports ground was one of the guards of the artifacts, a Mr. Urbaniek. At the 1988 Zündel trial, Felderer showed a slide of a map in one of the main guidebooks of Auschwitz which indicated that the field had been a sports stadium.

Tadeusz Borowski, a Polish Jewish prisoner at Birkenau wrote a book of short stories in which he mentioned the soccer field "on the broad clearing behind the hospital barracks" (see diagram) and remembered when he was the goalkeeper in a game on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. He said a sizeable crowd of hospital orderlies and convalescent patients had gathered to watch the game.

William Schick said in a 2006 interview with *The Sun-Herald* that he was placed in the Czech family camp at Birkenau where he played in soccer matches, and said the soccer field was located near Krema III.

Boxing matches were also popular among the inmates. Salamo Arouch was a boxing champion in his home town of Salonika, Greece; after arriving at Auschwitz in 1943, he participated in twice-weekly boxing matches. Fencing was popular among some; at the Ernst Zündel trial, Felderer showed a slide of inmates fencing. Unfortunately, we don't have access to any of these slides for this booklet.

Beyond the ruins of Krema III is a large grassy area that was once the Birkenau soccer field.

PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

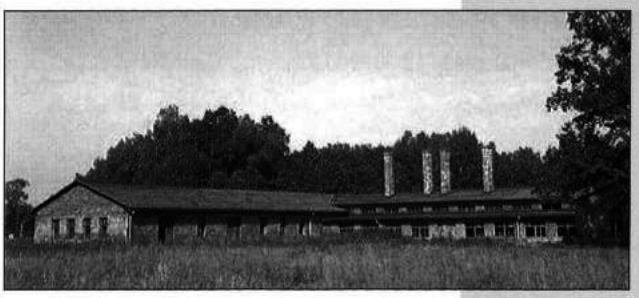
The Birkenau Concentration Camp

Birken means birches—pictured here a Birch tree grove at the west end of the camp.

PHOTO: SCRAPBOOKPAGES.COM

BIRKENAU is located three kilometers from Auschwitz I on a main road. Building began in 1941 for a camp to hold 200,000 persons, mainly non-workers and those waiting to be transferred elsewhere, thus there was a higher proportion of women, children, elderly and infirm than at Auschwitz. It eventually covered 425 acres and had 300 buildings. A few prisoners worked in the warehouses, in the kitchens and in the crematoria, but most did not work. If 75% of the Jews were killed on arrival, who lived in all those barracks? Not only that, but the Germans were building new barracks in the section the inmates called Mexico to house 50,000 more prisoners.

Today it's a vast open space with only a few isolated buildings scattered here and there. Prior to the year 2000, there were very few visitors to Birkenau. Tours didn't go there; even personal guides wouldn't take you there. Now it's the lesser part of a full tour, featuring a look at a sample sleeping and lavatory barracks, which are in very poor condition. The original barracks all had a porcelain-covered brick stove at one end from which



a pipe ran along the center of the barracks inside a low brick structure, keeping the entire barracks warm in winter. Prisoners could sit on it, and some said they even cooked on it! Each brick barracks in the women's section had its own lavatory.

THE CENTRAL SAUNA

This beautiful, modern hygiene building was built in 1943 and contained steam chambers and hot air ovens for disinfecting clothing. New arrivals came here first, had their hair shorn, showered and were given clean clothing. However, it didn't have a single sauna. It did have a large main room that was sometimes used as a ballroom.

Visitors to Birkenau are not shown this building, the largest in the camp.

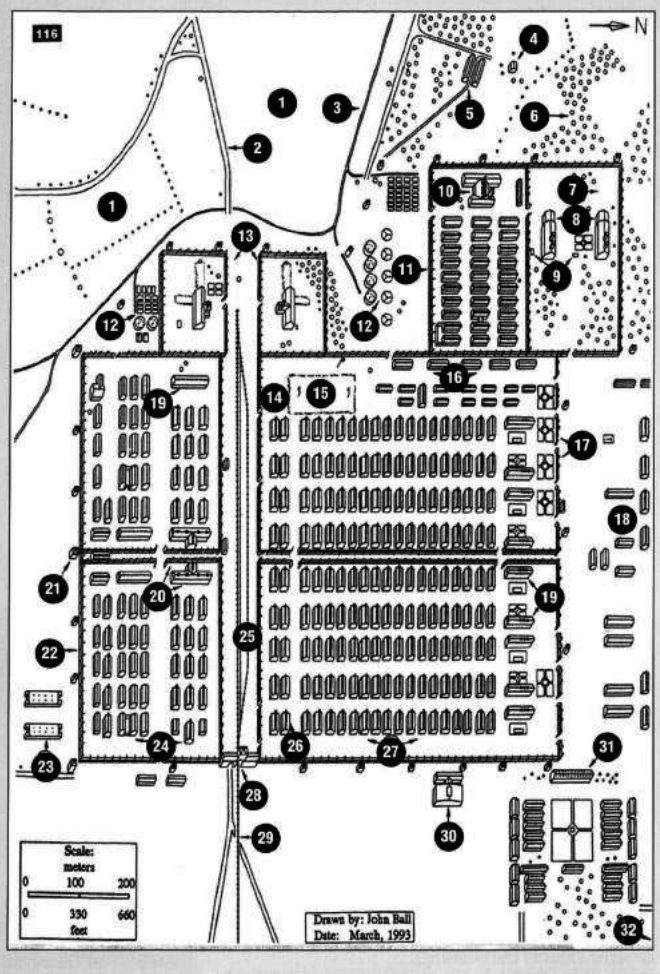
Extra clothing and valuables the prisoners brought with them were stored in the 30 wooden warehouses across the street from the sauna, which the Soviets burned down after they arrived.

There are other, smaller disinfection buildings (#20 on diagram on page 40) at Birkenau, but the guides won't take you there either. The doors are locked, and no signs identify the buildings.

"The Sauna" was the name given to the hygiene building because of the steam and hot air disinfection ovens. It's designed with two identical sides—one for men and one for women. Prisoners were brought here for showers.

Below, one of the steam chambers in the Central Sauna for delousing clothing. Note the door at each end.

DIAGRAM OF BIRKENAU CAMP



KEY TO DIAGRAM OF BIRKENAU CAMP

This diagram on the facing page was drawn by John C. Ball on the basis of air photos of four reconnaissance flights in 1944, as well as investigation on the spot.

1. Fields plowed and planted in 1944.

2. Access roads to the main camp.

3. Cesspools draining into the Sola 1.3 km farther west.

4. The "White House," where tens of thousands of people are supposed to have been murdered with Zyklon B.

5. This is where the victims are supposed to have undressed, although there was no building here before June 1944.

6. Trees.

The photographs taken of the above-mentioned four purification plants between May and September 1944 show no ditches, no piles of bodies and no smoke, although it is claimed that thousands of gassing victims were being thrown into large ditches and burnt, every day, since the crematoria were overloaded.

8. Crematoria IV and V.

9. Empty ditches, 6m long and 1.5m deep, with water at the bottom.

10. Central sauna.

11. Group of 30 barracks, nicknamed Canada by inmates, where the possessions of new arrivals were sorted and reutilized.

12. Round basins and ditches for water purification. A sewage purification plant was also begun above BIII, so that every construction section possessed a sewage purification plant. All waste water flowed into these installations and the more or less purified water then flowed into the Weichsel. These open-air sewage purification installations must have released terrible odors, especially during the summer. Many inmates reported an evil stench, which many of them attributed to the crematoria, while, in reality, it originated either from the purification plants or the petrochemical plants at Monowitz.

13. The two large crematoria II and III were visible to thousands of passers-by inside and outside the camp, over treeless fields and from the numerous barracks in the camp itself, they were only surrounded with a barbed wire fence.

14. Here there was an orchestra made up of inmates from Auschwitz and Birkenau, who gave Sunday concerts.

15. Sports and football fields.

16. Inmate hospital.

17. Vegetable gardens.

18. Camp expansion III was still not surrounded by barbed wire (see 230 and 231).

19. Kitchens (nine in the men's camp and four in the women's camp).

20. Buildings in which clothing, blankets and mattresses were disinfected.

21. Guard towers.

22. Three-meter-high barbed wire fence.

23. Camp area for potatoes and vegetables.

24. Women's camp: barracks of stone and wood.

25. Train platform.

26. Toilets and washroom.

27. Men's camp.

28. Main entrance.

29. Railway tracks.

30. Water pumping station.

31. Camp administration/related buildings.

32. To Birkenau.

One of the eleven original kitchens at Birkenau that was still standing back in 1997.

THE KITCHENS

The kitchens are also closed to the public, ostensibly for preservation and to prevent vandalism. But why is that a concern for some buildings and not others? According to Ditlieb Felderer, his slides show several extremely large cooking vats still inside the buildings.

MUSIC & MATING

A book written by a former inmate described how they put on shows with music and dancing and skits at Birkenau. Ruth Elias also mentioned the music shows in her book *Triumph of Hope*. The remarkable thing is that the SS guards sat in the audience side by side with the inmates. Cooperative interaction between guards and prisoners was not unusual. For instance, they worked together sorting clothing at the "Canada" warehouses and even took the opportunity to have affairs. There were a few marriages between guards and women prisoners at Birkenau, although only after the war. Prisoners, however, were allowed to marry each other. Some marriages took place and children were born.

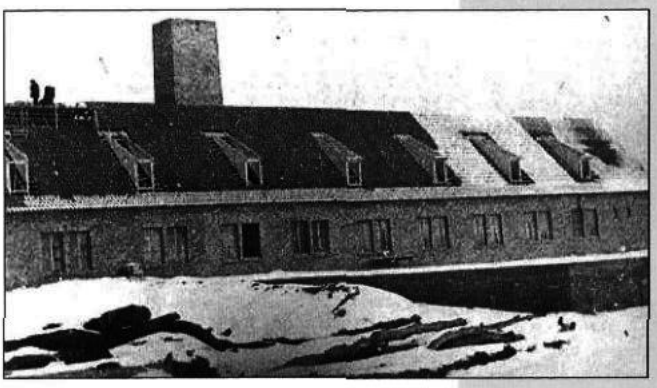
SPORT & SOCCER FIELD

Inmates wanted to engage in sports on their days off, and the guards had no objection—in fact, it was an order from Himmler to allow them sports because he thought it would increase bodily strength and help make them a better labor force. The inmates formed teams and enjoyed friendly competition on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, with enthusiastic cheering sections. Even the guards formed a team and played against the inmates! It is reported that teams sometimes used the crematorium grounds when there was no room on the main field (#15 on diagram on page 40).

CREMATORIUMS

There were four "Kremas" at Birkenau, of which you can see the ruins today. Kremas II and III are at the end of the road that runs from the main entrance, while IV (a reconstruction) and V are are nothing more than foundations, just north of the Central Sauna. If they were gas chambers, it means there were no

Crematorium II in Birkenau as it appeared in Feb. 1943, still under construction. The partially underground morgue, later called the "gas chamber," can be seen at right covered with a layer of snow. Its roof was six inches of concrete, three feet aboveground. Consider that Zyklon B pellets need to be heated to work.



Ruins of Crematorium II, photographed by the Soviets in Feb. 1945, after they had blown it up and blamed it on the Germans. In 2009 it was roped off, with a large sign proclaiming it is undergoing an expensive preservation process.

morgues during the two terrible typhus epidemics that struck the camp. Kremas IV and V had shower rooms and were close to the Sauna, which also had a shower room. The museum says these shower rooms were really gas chambers, which means there was only one shower room, in the Sauna, for 90,000 prisoners!

There is little doubt all the Kremas were destroyed by the Soviets shortly after their arrival, even though a book from the Auschwitz Museum says that Crematorium II and III were blown up by the Nazis on Jan. 20, 1945. Yet the officially accepted date that the Germans abandoned the camp is January 18—two days earlier. The Soviets found only a few dead bodies at the Birkenau camp, preserved by the freezing weather. The cremation ovens had been dismantled and taken from the camp in November 1944, after removing the roofs.

Left, ruins of Krema IV—even this is a reconstruction! Allegedly, the Polish people carted off all the original bricks.

LIBERATION AS PROPAGANDA

The photograph on this page is from footage used in a Soviet propaganda film, shot by a Polish soldier-liberator, and shows the Birkenau clothing warehouses (known as "Canada") burning. In the distance we see tall crematorium chimneys that had supposedly been blown up by the retreating Nazis one week before. (The story goes that the SS abandoned the complex on January 18, but sent a crew back on the 20th to blow up Crematorias II, III and V before the Russians advanced on the camp, which turned out to be on Jan. 27.)

Photo shows the clothing warehouses at Birkenau burning sometime after the arrival of the Soviets on Jan. 27, with crematoria chimneys still standing in the background. The Germans are blamed for setting the fires 10 days earlier and destroying the crematoriums.

This is the best evidence that the Soviet myth of the Nazis' desire to "destroy the traces of their crimes" is just that—a myth. The SS had left behind a total of over 7000 survivors capable of telling their story to the enemy, so what would be the point of demolishing the crematorium buildings?

The highly publicized Soviet "liberation" of Auschwitz is a work of propaganda. The Red Army happened upon the camp, told the people found there they were free to leave, and continued on their way West. The prisoners were left to find their way home under appalling conditions. Soviet intelligence units then moved in and decided how best to use what they found to advance their own cause.

The myth of the Auschwitz death camp was constructed, and has undergone many discards since then. The number of four million "gassed" is probably the major casualty of historical revisionism—but there are many others.

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL

At the end of the main road through Birkenau, just past the ruined crematoriums II and III (where you see the number 13 on the diagram on page 40) is a large sculpture and many plaques, each in a different language, but with the same inscription:

"For ever let this place be a cry of despair and a warning to humanity, where the Nazis murdered about one and a half million men, women and children, mainly Jews, from various countries of Europe."
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU
1940-1945

The original plaque, in place until 1990.

The present plaque makes no mention of four million victims.

However, previous to 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union, this inscription claiming 4 million deaths was on the plaques, and quite famous it was. The discrepancy between 4 million and 1.5 million didn't result in a change in the overall 6 million figure, nor has any adequate explanation been given for the failure to reduce the latter figure. Such is the nature of the Auschwitz-Birkenau experience.

The last roll call, taken on January 17, 1945, showed a total of 16,226 prisoners in Auschwitz I—10,030 men and 6,196 women. The total count for all three camps was 67,012, according to Danuta Czech.

Even with the publicity of the Nuremberg Trials, Auschwitz remained virtually unknown to the public for a decade after the war, and really didn't become the phenomenon it is today until 1989 after the fall of the

Pope Benedict views a plaque with the new inscription. Monument is in the center distance. All religious and political leaders are expected to pay homage at the "holy of holies."

Soviet Union. According to Walter Staeglich in *The Auschwitz Myth*, German and Austrian soldiers who were interned at the camp as POW's by the Soviets after the war reported they saw no traces of alleged mass murders anywhere in the camps. The Soviets did not permit outsiders to inspect the grounds.

The 46 volumes of "Death Books" kept by the Auschwitz political department and confiscated by the Soviets were turned over to the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1989. These records show around 69,000 prisoners died between July 29, 1941 and Dec. 31, 1943 [2.5 years]. The earlier death books are missing, as are those for 1944.

Based on these records, the International Red Cross has estimated that a total of around 135,000 [registered] prisoners, Jews and non-Jews, died in the three Auschwitz camps during its entire existence. These and other records are now available at the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolson, Germany.

Auschwitz: The Underground Guided Tour

What the Tour Guides Don't Tell You at Auschwitz-Birkenau

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